



# CIVIL RIGHTS ON DECK



## FORMER SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY SPEAKS AT USCG HQ BLACK HISTORY MONTH OBSERVANCE



From left to right: Jeffrey Radgowski, Deputy Assistant Commandant for Intelligence and CGHQ Black History Month Executive Champion, Jeb Johnson, Former Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, Dr. Terri Dickerson, Civil Rights Director, and Adm. Steven Poulin, Vice Commandant, USCG, gather for a photo.

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

“History is very personal to everyone in this room. History is the combined stories of each one of us, and each one of us does have a story,” stated Jeb Johnson, Fourth Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (2013-2017), as he addressed the Coast Guard workforce during the Service’s Black History Month event on February 16th. In his remarks, Johnson elaborated not only on his personal history, but also that of his relatives and ancestors which includes a member of the Golden Thirteen, the first African American officers in the United States Navy, a Tuskegee Airmen, America’s first Black military airmen, and relatives who were pinnacle figures of the Civil Rights movement. Johnson also noted that his son, Lt. Jeb Johnson Jr., is writing his own story in the Coast Guard. This year’s CGHQ Black History Month theme, “Black Resilience,” emphasizes the will and endurance shown by Black Americans seeking racial equality. Recognizing “Black Resilience” helps us to remember the struggles and successes of

Black Americans and to honor, celebrate, and understand their history as part of the collective American history; “A history where so many Americans have had to struggle with injustice, inequality, and disenfranchisement,” stated Adm. Steven Poulin, Vice Commandant, Coast Guard. Poulin added that despite such challenges faced by Black Americans historically and presently, he’s “optimistic” because of the progress that the Coast Guard has made “over the past 40 years.” Poulin closed his remarks with a call to action: “We must continue to be impatient with progress. We have to be a Service that creates full and equal opportunity for all Americans who desire to serve.”

## COAST GUARD MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS: HERE ARE WAYS THAT YOU CAN PREVENT RETALIATION

By Josh Love, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 3

Retaliation occurs when a supervisor is perceived to be “getting even” with an employee for participating in the Coast Guard’s Equal Employment Opportunity/Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) process. Retaliation is illegal, against Commandant policy, and detrimental to unit cohesion. If tolerated, workplace retaliation would prevent employees from reporting issues, undermine the Coast Guard complaint process, and ultimately condone a workplace that does not support the Commandant’s Equal Opportunity Policies. Here are a few tips for supervisors and managers to help prevent retaliation:

- 01 ➤ Educate your employees about retaliation and that it’s prohibited.
- 02 ➤ Respond to discrimination questions, concerns, and complaints promptly and effectively.
- 03 ➤ Hold employees accountable for complying with and enforcing the Coast Guard’s discrimination rules and policies.
- 04 ➤ Be transparent and explain to your employee how you reached a decision or implemented an action that affected them.

[Read the full article on MyCG](#) for other best practices that can help prevent retaliation. The total Coast Guard workforce must provide and engage in a fair and structured outlet to report, prevent, or process allegations of discrimination. Awareness of rights, supervisory responsibilities, civil rights law, and policies will reduce perceptions of retaliation and ensure compliance with the Commandant’s Equal Opportunity Policy.

## COAST GUARD ANTI-RETALIATION

STOP RETALIATION BEFORE IT STARTS

LEARN MORE





When units participate in the annual command checklist, they are improving organizational effectiveness and strengthening the workplace climate. (USCG Photo by PO3 Lauren Dean)

## COMMAND CHECKLIST: THE RESULTS ARE IN

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

The Civil Rights Command Checklist results for Fiscal Year 22 (FY22) reveal that required Coast Guard units comply with 99.5% of necessary civil rights program measurements. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requires all federal agencies to provide an annual assessment of their civil rights programs, and the command checklist helps accomplish this goal. Civil Rights Service Providers (CRSPs) send the command checklist to Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge (CO/OICs), where they provide a self-assessment of their unit by answering several questions relating to performance, civil rights training requirements, general command support of Equal Employment Opportunity/Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) initiatives, and more. The checklist is an organizational requirement for locations with 50 or more positions. CRSPs assisted 275 Coast Guard units or organizations in FY22 to ensure maximum compliance; 246 (89%) fully complied

with requirements. No units had more than two non-compliant items, and accessibility elements were the most reported non-compliant measures; 19 units reported the need for facility updates. Civil Rights Awareness training, NoFEAR Act training, and completion of the Defense Organization Climate Survey (DEOCS) were other non-compliant items units reported. Command checklists are provided back to CRSPs at the end of October every year, but units can engage their local CRSPs throughout the year for a better understanding of the checklist or assistance and to help achieve compliance with any requirements.

## HOW REQUESTING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY REVIEW CAN IMPROVE YOUR UNIT'S COMMAND CLIMATE

By Lt. Shirley Pilkey, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 1

Through the confidential Defense Organization Climate Survey (DEOCS), the Coast Guard can gather feedback about command climate factors within units related to readiness, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and more. While the DEOCS can help commands identify matters of Equal Opportunity (EO) and organizational effectiveness, it is not the only tool available. EO Reviews are another vital aspect of helping units maintain or improve cohesive and efficient workplaces. An EO Review is an advanced evaluative tool that can boost the Command's efforts to assess unit compliance with civil rights programs and evaluate command climate, which can be requested proactively. The benefits of requesting an EO Review before a civil rights incident occurs shows the crew that 1) the Commanding Officer (or equivalent) is engaged and attentive to their needs; 2) helps raise awareness of civil rights services and builds relationships with local Civil Rights Service Providers (CRSPs), and 3) the Command receives a full written report of review findings and a list of recommendations for any potential ways to improve the command's EO program and climate. One unit that proactively requested an EO review was Sector

Long Island Sound. The Civil Rights Directorate's EO team arrived at the unit and facilitated focus groups consisting of paygrade sessions which means the workforce was divided into paygrades and participants were asked questions about their work experiences, their thoughts on the command's climate, and how the overall unit is meeting civil rights requirements. The Command team expressed gratitude for the review and noted that the focus groups provided a rare opportunity for a targeted discussion while empowering the crew to offer contributions and recommendations on ways to help improve the overall climate. The time and effort was rewarded with an amazing 70% participation rate, nearly doubling their average rates, and contributed to the Sector's ongoing efforts to maintain a positive command climate. Contact your local [CRSP](#) to find out more or to request an EO Review.



From left to right: Leon Patterson, EEO Specialist, Zone 3, Lt. Shirley Pilkey, EO Advisor, Zone 2, and Jamie McCarrison, EEO Specialist, Zone 3 pose together during an EO review. (USCG Photo by Lt. Shirley Pilkey)



Nominations are now open for the 2023 Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) Military Meritorious Service Award. This honor recognizes members of the military (active and reserve) and government-employed military veterans who have promoted a positive image of American Indian and Alaskan Natives (AI/AN) in government service. Anyone within the Coast Guard can nominate a deserving individual. The deadline for submissions is April 3rd, 2023. [Learn more and nominate someone today!](#)





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## SOLVE DISAGREEMENTS EARLY WITH ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

*By OSCS Askia Carbee, EEO Specialist, CRD, Region 2*

Aggrieved individuals can use the Coast Guard's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process as an avenue for resolving Equal Employment Opportunity/Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) conflicts quickly and efficiently. In ADR, a trained, third-party neutral assists disputing parties in reaching a mutual settlement by using various informal techniques such as mediation. The ADR participation rate during the pre-complaint process in FY22 was 53.4%. Of the 47 cases that used ADR, 34% (16) settled during the pre-complaint process, exceeding the federal average of 19.1%. Individuals filing formal complaints may also use ADR, and 35.5% participated in using these methods in FY22, significantly higher than the 6.14% federal average. There are several benefits to ADR. First, are confidential settlement discussions. Other than a completed settlement, no written materials will be kept or used as part of official records. Second, using ADR can improve communication between the disputing parties and help mend working relationships. Third, aggrieved individuals convey their experiences directly to the management representative and get to hear from management directly rather than through a counselor. Fourth, disputes can be resolved on terms that all sides can accept. Fifth, if an agreement is reached, neither part admits to any wrongdoing or guilt within the agreement. Additionally, there are lower related costs and quicker outcomes for using ADR. For more information, please contact your servicing [Civil Rights Service Provider](#).



*Using ADR can resolve disputes quickly leading to improved workplace communication and increased morale and cohesion. (USCG Photo by PO3 Hunter Schnabel)*

## NEW EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST JOINS CIVIL RIGHTS TEAM

*By Carolyn Hunter, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 1*



The Civil Rights Directorate welcomes Ms. Leslie Y. Jones as the new Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist for Region 1, Zone 4. She sails over to us from the Department of the Navy. Jones has been a Civil Servant for the Federal Government for 15 years and a breeder of Yorkie-Poo dogs for eight years. Jones is a Washington D.C. native and alumni of Ballou Senior High School and Penn State University. Jones claims she was a tree in her previous life because she enjoys cracking open the cover of a new book to read monthly. Jones is a loving mother and grandmother, and her favorite quote is "It's never too late to become what you might have been," by George Eliot. Welcome to the CRD family!

## HONORING THE WOMEN WHO TELL THE COAST GUARD STORY

Since 1995, American Presidents have issued annual proclamations designating March as Women's History Month. This observance is a period to honor the achievements and contributions of women to our Nation and Coast Guard, and it is important to recognize and honor the strength and dedication of our sisters-in-arms throughout the Service. This year's theme, designated by the National Women's History Alliance, is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories." This theme honors the women who have made substantial contributions to American society through the power of storytelling. Women military members and civilian employees have played a critical role in shaping the Coast Guard's story. All Coast Guard Commands and units are encouraged to commemorate Women's History Month through in-person gatherings and remote collaboration platforms, websites, newsletters, and social media.

**WOMEN'S**

**HISTORY**

**MONTH**